NOVA SCOTIA BUILDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

WHAT WE HEARD

A Response to What Was Heard from the Public on the Barrier-free Requirements Contained in the Nova Scotia Building Code

January 2004

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The Nova Scotia Building Advisory Committee began an in depth review of the barrier-free requirements in the Nova Scotia Building Code regulations in 2001. The regulations contained in Schedule "C" Section 3.8 dates to the 1985 National Building Code. The committee heard there was a need to update to the next version of the National Code anticipated for 2005.

The committee issued a discussion paper highlighting 15 specific topics and a detailed questionnaire that requested response from the public on the direction it ought to take in addressing each of these concerns. The questionnaire also sought any other suggestions from the public concerning barrier-free requirements.

Residential Issues

The committee heard that Nova Scotia has a larger percentage of population with disabilities and a larger percentage of aged population than the national average. Projections indicate that these sectors of the population will continue to grow as a percentage of the population. Provincially, programs have been created aimed at enabling persons to age in their homes rather than be institutionalized.

The committee has made several recommendations to address building code issues raised by the higher-that-average aged and disabled persons residing in Nova Scotia.

When multiple residential units are constructed, one in five or part thereof would be constructed as full barrier-free suites. This is already a requirement in the tourist industry, and provisions exist to cover the requirements except for kitchen areas.

The committee has recommended that closed circuit monitoring systems be installed whenever security access is provided in apartment buildings, to allow persons with hearing impairments to identify visitors to the building. In many instances this requirement is voluntarily met by the use of the existing cable television systems.

Reuse of Existing Buildings

The committee heard that there are cases in which providing of full barrier-free access to an existing building is so expensive that it precludes the use of a building. The committee has detailed some alternative measures that would satisfy the intent of provision of access in some limited circumstances.

Universal Accessibility

The committee heard that universal accessibility is a goal and, therefore, recommends that an elevator be required if a building exceeds 600 m^2 [6, 458 square feet] on any floor. For existing buildings this would apply only when the occupancy classification of building changes, such as when a warehouse or office building is converted to apartments.

Building and tourist officials have expressed the concern that requirements for barrier-free access to tourist accommodations are not well written and that contradictory advice is being given to owners. We have rewritten the clauses in question to clarify the intended meaning.

The code previously addressed requirements for assistive hearing devices in certain locations. The committee recommends that these be expanded to include places of worship exceeding 100 m^2 and all courtrooms.

The code mandates the number and location of TTY phone service in public areas to meet the needs of the hearing impaired. However, it has been difficult to properly enforce the requirement. Changes are proposed to clarify the location and number of phones for the hearing impaired.

The committee heard that visual smoke alarms should be required in all buildings. This issue requires some further research to determine what technologies may be available to meet the intent of such a requirement. The committee may be in a position to make a further recommendation in time for adoption of the 2005 National Building Code.

The Code currently requires roll-in showers in all hospitals. However, in practice, hospitals normally provide bathing facilities to accommodate patients in various forms according to their abilities to bathe with or without assistance. The committee has recommended an amendment to allow optional means for assisted bathing.

The Code currently requires barrier-free parking spaces and dictates their location. Enforcement normally falls to the local police. To enable more effective enforcement, the committee proposes an amendment to require signage as described in the Motor Vehicle Act.

Language

The current regulation requires that access to amenities be available, but the language used has been found to be unclear. The National Building Code revised its language in 1995. To solve the language problems within the barrier-free requirements of the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations would require the entire section to be revised. The committee favors adopting the NBC requirements, but with the Nova Scotia amendments included. Overall, it recommends that the language conform to that of the NBC.

Third Party Interventions and Form of Tenure
Both "third party interventions" and "form of tenure" were addressed in the discussion paper. The committee has not changed its position in either case. However, in regard to third party interventions, it found the issue to be beyond the jurisdiction of the building code. It recommends that the Department of Environment and Labour review and address procedures to assist the Human Rights Commission should the Commission be called upon to investigate a complaint from a third party involving a municipality's failure to enforce the building code.

Additional Suggestions
We received numerous suggestions that warrant our further review. These are included as Appendix 2. The committee will review these suggestions and establish priorities at a later date.

Next Steps
The committee intends to develop proposed amendments where possible to be included with the proposal to adopt the National Building Code of Canada in 2005. A further public consultation is required by the Building Code Act to adopt these amendments into law.

Recommendations
The Nova Scotia Building Advisory Committee makes the following recommendations about barrier-free requirements and the Nova Scotia Building Code. If these are acceptable to those who responded to our discussion paper and questionnaire on this subject, then we will recommend that the Department of Environment and Labour adopt them.

Other Issues

Recommendation: Third Party Interventions
The Committee does not recommend any amendment to the Building Code Act or Regulation. It does however encourage the Department of Environment and Labour and the Human Rights Commission to establish procedures to adequately address complaints from parties who feel that there has been a failure to enforce the barrier-free requirements of the code.

Recommendation: Form of Tenure
No further action is required on the issue of "form of tenure."

Proposed Changes, Issues, and Options

Recommendation 1: Percentage in Multi-Unit Residential Buildings
Require every new building of residential occupancy with more than three suites to construct one in 20 suites (5 per cent) or part thereof to be fully barrier-free. Also, draft requirements for living space within these suites not already covered by regulation, such as kitchens.

Recommendation 2: Small Existing Premises
Develop alternative measures for barrier-free access to existing buildings within defined limited circumstances.

Recommendation 3: Tourist Facilities
Clarify the requirements made under the Building Code Act to improve uniform implementation of requirements for tourist accommodation.

Recommendation 4: Hearing-Impaired Services
Require closed-circuit monitoring whenever a new building entrance security system is installed, to assist occupants with hearing impairment to identify visitors.

Recommendation 5: Elevators
Amend the building code regulation to clarify that an elevator or lift is required in all new construction if floor area exceeds 600 m^2 and in all existing buildings whenever a change of occupancy classification occurs.

Recommendation 6: Floor Areas with Fixed Seating
Write the requirement for access to various amenities on different levels within a suite in a form that mirrors the National Building Code, which has a basic premise that barrier-free access is required unless there is an exemption.

Recommendation 7: Signage for Vehicle Parking
Incorporate the reference to the Motor Vehicle Act traffic sign regulation into the Building Code requirements.

Recommendation 8: Language
Draft the text of the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations using inclusive universal language.

Recommendation 9: Access to Toilets
Amend the regulation to clarify that a barrier-free path of travel is required to a water closet (toilet) within every residential suite.

Recommendation 10: Assistive Listening Devices
Amend the regulation as proposed to require the installation of assistive listening devices in all courtrooms and in all churches and places of worship exceeding 100 m^2 (theatres, classrooms, auditoria, and meeting rooms are already required to provide such devices) and investigate the likelihood that replacement technologies will make such an amendment redundant.

Recommendation 11: Showers in Hospitals and Care Facilities
Adopt the amendment, as proposed, to allow hospitals and full-care facilities some flexibility in providing barrier-free showers if patients or clients require assistance to bathe.

Recommendation 12: TTY Phones
Adopt the amendment, as proposed, for the location and number of TTY phones.

Recommendation 13: Visual Warning Signals in Multiple-Unit Residential Occupancies
Conduct further review and analysis on the life safety risks to determine whether a change ought to be implemented to require visual alarms signalling devices in all residential occupancies, and, if appropriate technology is available, propose an amendment requiring these devices for incorporation into the 2005 edition of the National Building Code.

Recommendation 14: Areas of Refuge
Delete the smoke control amendments in the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulation respecting provisions for areas of refuge, because the National Building Code requirement "Protection on Floor Areas with a Barrier-Free Path of Travel" makes the amendment redundant.

Recommendation 15: CSA Technical Standard/National Building Code Technical Requirements
Fully integrate the Nova Scotia technical requirements with the National Building Code technical requirements, applying the Nova Scotia requirements whenever they are more stringent and maintaining the scope and application of the technical requirements as set out in the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations.

WHAT WE HEARD

A Response to What Was Heard from the Public on the Barrier-free Requirements Contained in the Nova Scotia Building Code

January 2004

Purpose

In the fall of 2001 the Nova Scotia Building Advisory Committee issued a discussion paper, "The Barrier-free Requirements of the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations."

The purpose of the discussion paper was to elicit opinion on numerous issues that had come before the committee since the first provincially adopted barrier-free requirements was adopted in 1987 by the Building Code Act. As expected, response was robust. We sought and received opinions from the disabled community, building owners, design and construction industry stakeholders, and many interested Nova Scotians on barrier-free building design standards in the province.

This document is a summary of what was heard and the proposed recommendations of the Nova Scotia Building Advisory Committee. For a detailed account of responses, a separate document entitled "Public Response to the Discussion Paper on the Barrier-free Requirements of the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations" is available by request.

Introduction

Since the implementation of the barrier-free design requirements of the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations in the mid 1980s issues arose or had been identified within the disabled community, within the design and construction sector, and among building owners that warrant fuller discussion. The intent of issuing the discussion paper was to identify the issues, provide some background on them, identify possible solutions, and seek your opinions.

All were also invited to contribute new ideas for consideration by the Nova Scotia Building Advisory Committee (NSBAC).

Background/History

The Building Code Act proclaimed in Nova Scotia in 1987 introduced the first province-wide application of barrier-free requirements. While these requirements have been updated in 1993 and 1996, there has not been a full review of the requirements since they were initially introduced.

The Nova Scotia Building Advisory Committee is made up of representatives of various provincial stakeholder organizations. It is appointed by the Minister responsible for the Building Code Act. Its mandate includes providing advice to the Minister on issues related to the National Building Code as adopted and amended by the province.

Current Members

Peter Greer, Chair	NS & PEI Regional Council of Carpenters, Millwrights and Allied Workers
Richard Lind Vice Chair	Nova Scotia Home Builders Association
David Bateman	Nova Scotia Home Designers Association
Roy Strickland	Office of the Fire Marshal, Department of Environment and Labour
Heather Corrigan	Association of Interior Designers of Nova Scotia
Ralph Ferguson	Disabled Persons Commission
Robert McLaren	Nova Scotia Association of Architects
Gary Ruitenberg	Association of Professional Engineers of NS
Gerald Sampson*	Union of Nova Scotia Municipalities
Ed Thornhill	Nova Scotia Building Officials Association
Ozzie Wile	Atlantic Provinces Building Supply Dealers Assoc

* resigned August, 2003

Methodology

The committee identified various issues that have been brought to their attention and researched potential solutions. In most instances these solutions have evolved to the level of proposed amendments and are presented in that form. In other instances a direction is offered but the detailed draft amendment in regulatory form has yet to be established.

Outcomes

The Nova Scotia Building Advisory Committee continues to seek your thoughts on these issues. On those issues where we achieve consensus, we will propose amendments for the next issuance of the National Building Code anticipated in the spring of 2005.

While draft amendments are included for some of our recommendations, they are proposals only. Do not assume that the draft amendments will be formally adopted as they currently read or that they will be adopted at all.

The process for adoption of amendments follows a specific prescribed process required in law. To meet the requirements of the National Building Code, the committee will

- propose minor technical amendments to the regulations with the recommendation from the committee that the amendments be formally adopted
- make suggestions to expand the scope or application of the code with recommendations from the committee by formulating draft amendments to the code
- provide advice if suggestions fall beyond the jurisdiction of the committee and proposed actions

The committee committed to presenting this final report with recommended actions to the public.

Current Regulations

The current Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations are available on the government website at <http://www.gov.ns.ca/just/regulations/regs/bcregs.htm>.

Issues

The committee posed 16 topics in its discussion paper and commented on two other issues on which the committee felt it had reached conclusion.

Prior to issuing the Discussion Paper in 2001 the Nova Scotia Building Advisory Committee sought advice from the Department of Justice and the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission on two issues which had been of concern to the committee, namely what has been referred to as "third party interventions" and "form of tenure."

Third Party Interventions

The committee wrote in its discussion paper that "third party interventions" were beyond its scope to address under existing legislation. The committee was and remains satisfied that the existing mechanism under the Human Rights Act are the appropriate means to address these concerns.

The committee received three submissions on this topic, and it undertook a further review. The committee concluded that it remained more appropriate for complaints to be addressed under Human's Rights legislation. Any new process established under the Building Code Act would be as onerous as may be the case under existing Human Rights legislation.

One aspect that warrants further review is whether a Human Rights adjudicator would be able to seek an opinion from the committee in a manner similar to the courts, as is allowed under the Building Code Act.

Recommendation: Third Party Interventions

The Committee does not recommend any amendment to the Building Code Act or Regulation. It does however encourage the Department of Environment and Labour and the Human Rights Commission to establish procedures to adequately address complaints from parties who feel that there has been a failure to enforce the barrier-free requirements of the code.

Form of Tenure

There was no further discussion on the "form of tenure" matter, and there was no public opinion expressed on this issue.

Recommendation: Form of Tenure

No further action is required on the issue of "form of tenure."

Proposed Changes, Issues, and Options

Question 1: Percentage of units in multiple-unit buildings required to be barrier free
Should a percentage of dwelling units in multiple unit buildings be constructed as barrier-free or be easily converted to become barrier-free?

We heard overwhelming support for the idea that some percentage of units be constructed as or be easily converted to barrier-free suites. Most supported the idea that a percentage of units be constructed to be fully barrier-free, but a significant minority supported a combination of fully barrier-free and easily converted suites.

When asked what percentage of units in multiple unit buildings ought to be made barrier free, the majority suggested between 5 and 20 per cent. Some suggested the percentage should be based on statistical demographics for the province.

Several suggested

- a greater need in urban cores
- buildings should be universally accessible
- financial incentives to landlords
- financial incentives to owners
- chemical sensitivity be addressed
- access for deaf and hard of hearing, visual fire alarms etc.
- 95 per cent should be adaptable and the remaining 5 per cent barrier-free given that 21 per cent of Nova Scotians are persons with disabilities (2 per cent use wheel chairs and a large number have mobility problems), if all units had partial compliance than persons with disabilities would be able to visit

Most were of the opinion that some suites should be designed and constructed as fully compliant barrier-free units.

Recommendation 1: Percentage in Multi-Unit Residential Buildings
Require every new building of residential occupancy with more than three suites to construct one in 20 suites (5 per cent) or part thereof to be fully barrier-free. Also, draft requirements for living space within these suites not already covered by regulation, such as kitchens.

Every building with more than three units would be required to construct 5 per cent as fully barrier-free suites throughout. This would include not only access to the suite but also access throughout the suite including kitchen and bathroom facilities. In a building with 4 to 20 units, one barrier-free suite would be provided. For each additional 20 units or part thereof, an additional barrier-free suite would be required.

The current requirement of the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulation already requires doors to at least one bathrooms in all suites be accessible. [see 3.8.3.3.(2)]

Proposed Amendment
The proposed amendment would read as follows:

> **3.8.1.2. Application**
>
> .....
>
> (4) Except as exempt by 3.8.1.2.(1)(a) in residential occupancies of multiple suites, one unit conforming to Article 3.8.3.16. [3.8.3.16 addresses the design considerations of sleeping rooms and bathrooms, or a new article as may be decided] shall be provided for every twenty (20) units or part thereof.

An additional amendment for the design considerations for kitchens will be developed to complete the requirements for a barrier-free residential suite package. In addition, design guides could be promoted to assist in the understanding of the requirements.

Question 2: Exempt small existing premises from having to meet barrier-free requirements
There was a clear direction from the public response on this issue. A little more than half supported some exemption, but some of those opposed did suggest some combination of options would be acceptable. Typically smaller businesses have suffered from the costs of renovation to allow reuse of existing buildings. This most often becomes a factor when an older existing building is proposed to have a change of occupancy classification, such as from a house to a bookstore.

A majority of all responses agreed that the regulation ought to be amended to "Allow a variance where barrier-free access may not be fully meet but the facility is improved from its former state." Some also agreed that the regulation ought to, "Exempt designated 'Heritage Building' or those within a designated 'Heritage Conservation District.'" A majority felt it should be based on limiting area [size] only but many felt any amendment should take each of the four options posed into consideration: size, undue financial hardship, variances, heritage exemptions.

Most agreed that building area should be the primary criteria to determine if partial exemption should be allowed.

The committee found that many opinions expressed some need to allow variances, in very controlled ways. Many made pragmatic comments such as

- encourage re-use of existing buildings and accept that certain requirements would never be feasible
- exempt existing small businesses due to financial hardship, unless they

were renovating the premises in a major fashion. Heritage buildings forced to comply with the code/new code would destroy the reason for their classification [as heritage buildings].

- apply only unsafe conditions restrictions and life safety issues when there is a change of occupancy classification
- allow for at least partial accessibility to gain entrance in all building such as ramps, grab bars, railings for the mobility impaired, and provisions for other disabled persons such as the blind
- do not force interior barrier-free requirements if it is impossible to provide a ramp for building access

Undue financial hardship was deemed too unwieldy to assess. Take the example of a relatively small corner store operation. If owned by a large national chain, it should not be exempt under such a provision but if owned by an individual of modest means the cost to upgrade might be prohibitive and therefore deserving of an exemption.

Many comments were opposed to exemptions based on "heritage" designations alone. On the other hand, many felt that the reason for designation could be diminished by forcing barrier-free compliance on existing buildings when there is a change of occupancy classification.

Recommendation 2: Small Existing Premises
Develop alternative measures for barrier-free access to existing buildings within defined limited circumstances.

Alternate Compliance
Alternate compliance is already used in the regulation to provide some fire safety alternatives in existing buildings. The committee proposes to include some very specific categorizes that would provide limited alternative measures for owners to comply with the code.

These are

- alterations of existing small buildings
- change of occupancy classification of existing small buildings
- define a limiting building area, such as not more than 1023 sq. ft. [95 m^2]
- limited by distance from the property line to main entrance level.
- allow designation of other than the main entrance as the barrier-free access

The following table has been prepared as an example.

No. 37	Code Requirement	Alternate Compliance Method
	Entrances 3.8.1.3.(1) Ramped Barrier free path of travel to entrance	Where an existing building has: (a) a building area less than 95 m^2, [1023 sq. ft.] and (b) the slope from all entrances floor level to a street or public way is greater than 1 in 10, and (c) no entrance is more than 1m to the property line, and (d) no* alternate access to an entrance from a street or public way is possible; the owner may use a stair with (a) a maximum rise of 150 mm [6"], and (b) a minimum run of 280 mm [11"], and (c) tactile landings, and (d) contrasting colour nosings, and (c) and unobstructed width of 1 m

* Note the regulation requirement is for 50 per cent of all public entrances. Typically such a small building may only have 2 entrances.
Public way means a sidewalk, street, highway, square, or other open space to which the public has access, as of right or by invitation, expressed or implied.
Street means any highway, road, boulevard, square or other improved thoroughfare 9 m or more in width, which has been dedicated or deeded for public use, and is accessible to fire department vehicles and equipment.

Intent

Where an existing building with a building area not greater than 95 m^2 is required to provide barrier-free access, such access may be provided to a side or back entrance to a building where the front or principal access is not reasonably able to be converted.

If a building cannot provide a barrier-free path of travel to any entrance from a street or public way, and has a foot print no larger than 95m^2, then a stair may be allowed which conforms to allow the use of mobility aids such as crutches and canes.

Innovative Comments

The committee also heard some innovative ideas that are beyond their scope of addressing under the Building Code Act and Regulations. These ideas suggested using tax incentives and grants to encourage compliance:

- create a committee to administer housing improvement grants. This way landlords would have no excuse to meet barrier-free requirements. Allow a reasonable time for improvements to be made.
- tax incentives create a financial reason to "buy in " to creating access
- provide other options to deal with financial hardship.
- provide 50 per cent subsidy to provide accessibility

These comments will be brought to the attention of appropriate persons for their consideration.

Question 3: Tourist facilities
Should the language of the code be changed to clarify that existing single-dwelling units on one lot are exempt form barrier free provisions, and included accommodations such as bed and breakfasts, country homes, cottages, and cabins used as tourist facilities?

The intent of this discussion was to clarify the existing requirements of the building code regulation. The current regulation in Nova Scotia already equals or exceeds other parts of Canada in application of these requirements on tourist facilities. There were a number of objections raised based on the premise that this was a reduction in the existing standard. The text did not fully explain the existing circumstance sufficiently.

Reading through the comments it becomes clear that most do not object to the existing exemption for bed and breakfasts. Many stated that once they are over a certain size then the code should apply, which is now typically the case. For licensing and code purposes, a bed and breakfast may have up to five bedrooms, including the owners', after which they are licensed as a country inn, and considered by building code as a hotel.

Intent
The proposal is intended to capture the idea that small tourist accommodation are exempt unless they add a sleeping unit on the entrance level of the premises. Once they decide to add a sleeping unit on the entrance level the unit, the public guest areas, the entrance, and the parking must fully comply.

The owner may designate the entrance level, which is the same as any building owner is currently treated for application of barrier-free requirements. In most instances this is not problematic, but when a building is on a sloped site there may be advantages to treat one level rather than another as the entrance level. For example, if the site is practically speaking level, but the existing entrances are above or below grade, there may be an advantage to naming the upper or lower level the entrance level. This most often depends upon the internal uses and design of the space in the building.

Recommendation 3: Tourist Facilities
Clarify the requirements made under the Building Code Act to improve uniform implementation of requirements for tourist accommodation.

Proposed amendment
A number of amendments are required to clarify the intent. The proposed amendments are highlighted in **bold text**.

In addition sentence 3.8.1.2. (3) is redrafted to clarify the relationship for where full fire alarm systems are required. This is not a change to current intent but a clarification to the meaning.

3.8.1.2. Application

(1) The requirements of this section apply to all buildings, except
(a) houses, including semi-detached, duplexes, triplexes, townhouses, row houses, boarding houses, and rooming houses,
(b) houses on their own lot, licensed under the Tourist Accommodations Act as fixed roof accommodations, for not more than 10 persons including the owner and the owner's family, except as required by 3.8.1.2.(5),
(c) buildings of Group F, Division 1 major occupancy,
(d) buildings which are not intended to be occupied on a daily or full time basis, including automatic telephone exchanges, pumphouses, and substations, and
(e) industrial occupancies with an operation which is not adaptable to barrier-free.

(2) In **fixed roof and campground accommodations**, one sleeping unit conforming to Article 3.8.3.16. shall be provided for every twenty (20) sleeping units or part thereof.

(3) In **fixed roof accommodations, when a fire alarm system is required by Subsection 3.2.4. or 9.10.17. of National Building Code of Canada,** at least one sleeping unit for every twenty (20) sleeping units or part thereof, other than those required in Sentence 3.8.1.2.(2), shall be provided with a warning system which shall conform to Article 3.8.3.17..

(4) Every floor area from which more than one exit is required and to which a barrier-free path of travel is required to provide access, shall be served by one or more areas of refuge, as described in Article 3.8.3.18. so that they are accessible from two directions of travel.

(5) Where an alteration on the entrance level is made to a house exempt by 3.8.1.2.1.(b) to add sleeping accommodation,
(a) one sleeping unit conforming to Article 3.8.3.16. shall be provided for every twenty (20) sleeping units or part thereof, and
(b) an entrance conforming to 3.8.1.3. (3), and [note a new (3) is required]
(c) barrier free path of travel conforming to 3.8.2.1.(1) (b) and (c), and
(d) one parking stall for each required sleeping unit under this sentence conforming with 3.8.2.2.(5)

The following definitions would be added to the NS Building Code Regulation:

fixed roof accommodations means the same as defined by the Tourist Accommodations Regulations made under the Tourist Accommodations Act

campground accommodations means the same as defined by the Tourist Accommodations Regulations made under the Tourist Accommodations Act

In the following section of the NS Building Code Regulation we would add a new sentence (3).

3.8.1.3. Entrances

.....

2. Where a house is required to conform to the requirements of sentence 3.8.1.2.(5) such house shall provide one barrier free entrance in conformance with sentence (1).

Additional Issues

In addition to issues raised in the discussion paper, the committee heard a number of suggestions that are addressed in the above amendment. For example, it has always been held that the barrier-free requirements of the code apply equally to buildings on a campground as they do to any other tourist facility. This, however, was never explicit in the building code requirements. This has been rectified.

Other Comments

Several commented that tourist literature is not as clear as might be about the level of accessibility available.

Question 4: Building security for hearing impaired occupants

Should the code requirement be changed to require, where a building entrance security system is installed, a closed circuit monitoring system be available to assist occupants with hearing impairment to identify visitors?

There was overwhelming support for an amendment to the current requirements of the regulation. The cost appears to be less than $2000 for a 4-unit building. Compliance could be as simple as a closed circuit camera tied into a cable television feed and displayed on one of the cable channels.

Recommendation 4: Hearing-Impaired Services

Require closed-circuit monitoring whenever a new building entrance security system is installed, to assist occupants with hearing impairment to identify visitors.

Proposed amendment

The proposed amendment would indicate this by modifying the current requirement as shown in bold:

3.8.1.3.(4) Where entrances are equipped with security systems,
(a) both visual and audible signals shall be used to indicate when the door lock is released and
(b) a closed circuit visual monitoring system shall be provided.

Intent
This would address the fact that while those without a hearing impairment can identify those at a security door by their voice, those with a hearing impairment may be unable to distinguish a voice or hear it at all.

Question 5: Clarification of the Intent of the Occupancy Requirements
The discussion paper sought opinion on the following three questions:

- Should the code requirement be changed to require an elevator or lift where a building exceeds 600 m^2 in building area?
- Should the code requirement be changed to require an elevator or lift where a existing building, under going a change of occupancy classification, exceeds 600 m^2 in building area?
- If you agree there should be a change to the current requirement of the code, does the option satisfy your concerns?

Overall there was very strong support to require barrier-free access throughout all buildings whenever possible. Clearly cost becomes a significant factor in making such a requirement, especially the impact in an existing older building. The committee concurred with a decision that had been taken in 1987 when the requirements were originally adopted that suggested only buildings over 600 m^2 be required to provide elevators or lifts. In a decision rendered by the committee in 1998, it found the intent of the regulation was to require an elevator to access the second level of the particular building. The effect of the particular decision was that the project did proceed as originally conceived.

Currently the National Building Code does not require elevators to be installed in a building. They are deemed to be a convenience not a requirement. In many instances elevators are provided by building owners. The Nova Scotia Building Code Regulation adopts and amends the National Building Code. In this instance, this would be a significant amendment and readers are cautioned to note that this requirement, if adopted, could force owners of existing buildings to install elevators or lift devices if a level above or below the entrance to a building were to undergo a change of occupancy classification.

For example, a building with a 2nd floor area larger than 600 m^2 [6, 460 sq. ft.] would have to provide an elevator if the occupancy classification were to change from Group E, Mercantile to Group D, Business and Personal Services or Group A, Assembly such as a school or restaurant.

Recommendation 5: Elevators
Amend the building code regulation to clarify that an elevator or lift is required in all new construction if floor area exceeds 600 m^2 and in all existing buildings whenever a change of occupancy classification occurs.

Proposed amendment
The revised language proposed is shown in bold:

3.8.2. Occupancy Requirements
3.8.2.1. Areas Requiring Barrier-Free Path of Travel
(1) A barrier-free path of travel shall be provided **to, and;**
(a) in the entrance storey, and
(b) in each storey where the floor area of the storey exceeds 600 m^2 , and(c) in each storey served by a passenger elevator or passenger elevating device from the entrance described in Article 3.8.1.3.

Question 6: Barrier-free access within floor areas with fixed seating
The committee received mixed opinion in response to this discussion issue. The current code requires that a barrier-free path of travel be provided to 50 per cent of public floor spaces that consist of more than tier or floor level containing fixed seating. This language has led to misunderstandings.

In some instances if there are three different spaces at the same level all above the entrance level, then one might assume that at least two of three have a barrier-free path of travel to them but others argue that only one tier may be required to be served by a barrier-free path of travel if that area has at least 50 per cent of the seating on the three raised tiers.

The National Building Code was extensively re-written after originally using similar language. The NBC assumes that all space has a barrier-free path of travel to it and then makes some exemptions.

In posing the issue the committee was seeking opinion on whether conceptually we should take a similar path. Respondents expressed general support not only to this question, but also for the general theme that universal accessibility is a desirable goal.

The committee agrees, and in proposing the move to adopting the National Building Code language on this item it sought to review moving to the National Building Code language overall. The results of the broader review are reported under Proposed Change 15.

Recommendation 6: Floor Areas with Fixed Seating
Write the requirement for access to various amenities on different levels within a suite in a form that mirrors the National Building Code, which has a basic premise that barrier-free access is required unless there is an exemption.

Question 7: Signage for vehicle parking on private property
The discussion paper posed the following questions:

Should the code requirement be changed to adopt the National Building Code requirement for signs posted at least 1500 mm [5 feet] above the ground?

Do you agree that the Regulations should adopt the provincial Motor Vehicle Act standard for accessible parking signage.

There was broad agreement to incorporate reference to provincial law to assure that appropriate signage is used.

Recommendation 7: Signage for Vehicle Parking
Incorporate the reference to the Motor Vehicle Act traffic sign regulation into the Building Code requirements.

Vehicle parking signage on private property should be consistent with the requirements of the Motor Vehicle Act traffic sign regulations which state:

> **"Accessible parking" signs shall have a white background with red circle circumscribing a black letter "P" with a red diagonal superimposed over the letter "P"; a white and blue handicapped person symbol and in black letters the words "accessible parking by permit only." The signs may have one or two arrows pointing in the direction or directions in which parking is prohibited. The signs may show in black letters and numerals the length of time, the hours of day and days of the week during which a person is permitted to park in an "accessible parking" zone a vehicle on which is displayed an identification issued pursuant to the regulations respecting identification permits for vehicles transporting handicapped persons.**

Proposed Amendment
The proposed amendment would read:

3.8.2.2. Vehicle Parking

.....

[d] be clearly marked as being for the use of persons with physical disabilities, and
[e] be identified by a sign located not less than 1 500 mm above ground level, and
[f] is in compliance with the provincial Motor Vehicle Act traffic sign regulations.

.....

Question 8: Improved language
There was broad support to move to inclusive universal language throughout the text of the regulation.

It was found in a more detailed review that the National Building code uses more universal language than the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations in Schedule C Barrier-free Design.

Recommendation 8: Improved Language
Draft the text of the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations using inclusive universal language.

The committee conducted a broader review of the use of language as compared to the National Building Code language throughout. The results of the broader review are reported under Proposed Change 15.

Question 9: Multiple suites, doors and access to bathrooms
The Discussion Paper raised the following issues:

Should the code requirement be changed to make more explicit that a barrier-free path of travel is required from the entrance of a suite of residential occupancy in multiple-unit buildings to enable access to a toilet?

The NS Building Code Regulation has required access to all residential suites constructed since 1987 and that a washroom have a door 760 mm wide. There were two significant issues related to this requirement: one, the door width may be too narrow and two, there was no explicit requirement for a barrier-free path of travel to the washroom.

Recommendation 9: Access to Toilets
Amend the regulation to clarify that a barrier-free path of travel is required to a water closet (toilet) within every residential suite.

Proposed amendment
The amendment to the regulation would read as follows:

3.8.2.1. Areas Requiring Barrier-Free Path of Travel
1) A barrier-free path of travel shall be provided;

.....

m) to at least one water closet within a suite of residential occupancy.

Intent
The impact of this amendment would be to require an unobstructed path not less than 920 mm wide and a door to the water closet with an unobstructed open width of not less than 800 mm.

The intent is not to make the washroom fully accessible, but to clarify that all residential suites in multiple-unit buildings should have at least one water closet accessible.

Question 10: Assistive Listening Devices
The committee received widespread support for proposed changes to requirements for the installation of assistive listening devices in all courtrooms, and churches and places of worship exceeding 100^2, in addition to areas already required to provide such devices such as theatres, classrooms, auditoria, meeting rooms.

Recommendation 10: Assistive Listening Devices
Amend the regulation as proposed to require the installation of assistive listening devices in all courtrooms and in all churches and places of worship exceeding 100 m^2 (theatres, classrooms, auditoria, and meeting rooms are already required to provide such devices) and investigate the likelihood that replacement technologies will make such an amendment redundant.

Proposed amendment
There was strong support for the proposed amendment, which reads

> 3.8.3.7. Assistive Listening Devices
> (1) Except as permitted in Sentence (2), in buildings of assembly occupancy, all classrooms, auditoria, meeting rooms, **churches or places of worship,** and theatres with an area of more than 100 m^2, **and all courtrooms** shall be equipped with an assistive listening system encompassing the entire seating area.
>
> (2) Where the assistive listening system required in Sentence (1) is an induction loop system, only half the seating area in the room need be encompassed.

Question 11: Showers in hospitals and care facilities
The committee received strong support for an amendment to allow hospitals and full-care facilities in which patients or clients require assistance to bath some flexibility in provision of barrier-free showers.

The intent is to allow hospitals or acute-care facilities to provide common use showers or suitably equipped tubs because of public liability issues for these type facilities in which patients are not able to bath or shower without assistance or monitoring.

Recommendation 11: Showers in Hospitals and Care Facilities
Adopt the amendment, as proposed, to allow hospitals and full-care facilities some flexibility in providing barrier-free showers if patients or clients require assistance to bathe.

Proposed amendment
The amended provision 3.8.3.12. (2) would read

Where individual shower stalls are provided for use by residents and patients in buildings of Group B, Division 2 institutional occupancy the shower stalls provided shall conform to the requirements of Clauses (1)(a) to (i) except in a hospital, **a nursing home or residential care facility licensed under the Homes for Special Care Act, a home for aged or disabled persons to which the Homes for Special Care Act applies or a part of a health-care facility used for the acute or long-term care** where

(a) common showers are provided in conformance with Clauses (1)(a) to (i), or

(b) common bath tubs equipped with hoist mechanisms are provided to accommodate residents and patients.

Question 12: TTY phones
The committee received positive response to the proposed amendments.

Recommendation 12: TTY Phones
Adopt the amendment, as proposed, for the location and number of TTY phones.

Proposed amendment

3.8.3.14. Public Telephones

.....

(5) At least one built-in teletypewriter telephone [TTY] shall be provided and located in a publicly accessible location where

[a] four or more public access telephones are provided, including interior and exterior locations, or

[b] the building area exceeds 600 m_ in a Group A, Group B, Group D, Group E occupancy, or in a hotel or motel, or

[c] a hotel or motel, is required by sentence 3.8.1.2.(2) to provide a barrier-free suite, or

[d] a Tourist Cabin is required by sentence 3.8.1.2.(2) to provide barrier-free suites, at least one built-in teletypewriter telephone [TTY] must be located in public location, or a portable unit available for use.

(6) Where public telephones are provided, at least one electrical receptacle shall be provided within 0.5 m of one of the public telephones.

Question 13: Broaden the Requirements for Visual Warning Signs in Multiple Unit Residential Occupancies.

The committee heard that a change ought to be implemented to require visual alarms signaling devices in all residential occupancies; however, the cost for such alarms appear to outweigh the life safety risk. There was no information submitted that supported the requirement for visual alarms.

It is noted that Ontario is seeking public comment on requiring visual alarms to be installed in public corridors in other-than-residential occupancies.

The committee determined that further analysis and study of potential options is required before it could make an informed recommendation.

Recommendation 13: Visual Warning Signals in Multiple-Unit Residential Occupancies

Conduct further review and analysis on the life safety risks to determine whether a change ought to be implemented to require visual alarms signaling devices in all residential occupancies, and, if appropriate technology is available, propose an amendment requiring these devices for incorporation into the 2005 edition of the National Building Code.

Comments and Suggestions Received

The committee heard a variety of suggestions including

- Should be installed as required on request of the occupant with funding assistance, if required, from government.
- Include all public areas of any Group C over 2000 m^2 total floor area and focus on precise individuals residences for within suites. I believe a municipal Group C tax levy to fund individual in suite need is required. 1 in 20 for tourist suites seems ok.
- This should be in both codes, so it would be picked up in renovation. The building inspector would have as authority as the fire marshal's office to enforce these codes.
- Visual warnings should be required in tourist accommodations hospitals and other public buildings. [Editors note: The code currently requires them for tourist accommodations if a fire alarm system is installed.]
- A percentage of residential units should be required to have visual alarms.
- Building owner would suffer for rents would rocket with visual warning signs.
- Agree that occupants change and fluctuate over time—so best addressed with national Fire Code. University residences/dorms should not be exempt.
- Several noted this should be under the fire code on the mistaken belief that the fire code addresses construction requirements such as fire alarms and emergency lighting. These are actually addressed under the

building code.

- Warnings signs for strong chemical use to warn those with chemical and environmental sensitivities.
- With low vacancy rates there is not always a choice in apartment units. Units even if barrier free will not be left vacant to be available for the disabled. Fire Alarm requirements are in the NBC not the NFC.
- Visual warning signs should be 1–10 ratio. What about the visually impaired or blind? There are no recommendations in this survey and why it is [not] done in a format for the print disabled? [Editors note: Copies were made available in various formats including Braille upon request.]
- Should also address systems in the fire code and any emergency. Upon reservation being made the need for special adaption should be asked for or requested and the building for rent should have the equipment available.
- It's a matter of safety that multiple unit residential buildings be equipped with visual warning signs.
- Only if BF requirements come into play.
- Fire Code is a maintenance document and does not address the issue of visual warning signs.
- The requirements should be broadened.
- For new construction, requiring provisions for visual warnings could be installed during the initial electrical wiring and be connected as persons move in.
- Visual warning should be throughout due to liability and insurance concerns.

Question 14: Areas of Refuge

There was broad consensus that the Areas of Refuge requirements be deleted from the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations. A task group reviewed this requirement and reached the same conclusion.

Areas of Refuge were originally created in the National Building Code 1985 edition as apart of smoke-control measures in buildings. In subsequent editions of the National Code other measures were introduced that superseded the requirements for areas of refuge.

The measures available under Article 3.3.1.7. Protection on Floor Areas with a Barrier-Free Path of Travel, National Building Code 1995 surpass the antiquated measures of Areas of Refuge for the safety of all building occupants. (See Appendix 1 for text of NBC requirement.)

Recommendation 14: Areas of Refuge
Delete the smoke control amendments in the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulation respecting provisions for areas of refuge, because the National Building Code requirement "Protection on Floor Areas with a Barrier-Free Path of Travel" makes the amendment redundant.

Question 15: Adopt by reference the CSA technical standard or retain the National Building Code technical requirements
The committee found that there was some support to adopt the CSA technical standards, but even more support to revert solely to the National Building Code technical standards. Some suggested combining the CSA, NBC, and ADA standards into one new technical document.

There was a prevailing response, however, that we need to move to a uniform standard that reduces redundancy and confusion. Several suggested that an illustrated guide ought to be published.

The committee reviewed the National Building Code technical standards including proposed amendments for 2005 and compared these to the Nova Scotia Building Code technical standards.

The committee found that in many instances there was no difference between the technical requirements and, as noted in this review, there were a number of instances where the NBC version was actually much more positive, and easier to understands and apply.

Recommendation 15: CSA Technical Standard/National Building Code Technical Requirements
Fully integrate the Nova Scotia technical requirements with the National Building Code technical requirements, applying the Nova Scotia requirements whenever they are more stringent and maintaining the scope and application of the technical requirements as set out in the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations.

Question 16: Additional Suggestions
The committee also sought additional suggestions that the Nova Scotia Building Advisory Committee should take into consideration respecting the barrier-free design requirements of the Nova Scotia Building Code Regulations.

Numerous suggestions received warrant further review by the Nova Scotia Building Advisory Committee. These suggestions are included as Appendix 2. The committee will review these suggestions and establish some priorities at a later date.

Appendix 1
Excerpt from the National Building Code of Canada 1995

3.3.1.7. Protection on Floor Areas with a Barrier-Free Path of Travel
1) Every floor area above or below the first storey that is not sprinklered throughout and that has a barrier-free path of travel shall
a) be served by an elevator
    i) conforming to Sentences 3.2.6.5.(4) to (6),
    ii) protected against fire in conformance with Clauses 3.2.6.5.(3)(b) or (c), and
    iii) in a building over 3 storeys in building height, protected against smoke movement so that the hoistway will not contain more than 1% by volume of contaminated air from a fire floor during a period of 2_h after the start of a fire, assuming an outdoor temperature equal to the January design temperature on a 2.5% basis determined in conformance with Subsection 2.2.1.,
b) be divided into at least 2 zones by fire separations conforming to Sentences (2), (3) and (4) so that
    i) persons with physical disabilities can be accommodated in each zone, and
    ii) the travel distance from any point in one zone to a doorway leading to another zone shall be not more than the value for travel distance permitted by Sentence 3.4.2.5.(1) for the occupancy classification of the zone,
c) in the case of residential occupancies, be provided with balconies conforming to Sentence (5), except on the storey containing the barrier-free entrance required by Article 3.8.1.2.,
d) have an exterior exit at ground level, or
e) have a ramp leading to ground level. (See Appendix A.)

2) Except as permitted by Sentence (3), the fire separations referred to in Clause (1)(b) shall have a fire-resistance rating not less than 1 h.

3) The fire-resistance rating of the fire separations referred to in Clause (1)(b) is permitted to be less than 1 h but not less than 45 min provided the fire-resistance rating required by Subsection 3.2.2. is permitted to be less than 1 h for
a) the floor assembly above the floor area, or
b) the floor assembly below the floor area, if there is no floor assembly above.

4) A door acting as a closure in a fire separation referred to in Clause (1)(b) shall be weatherstripped or otherwise designed and installed to retard the passage of smoke. (See A-3.3.3.5.(6) in Appendix A.)

5) A balcony required by Clause (1)(c) shall
a) have direct barrier-free access from the suite or floor area
b) be not less than 1.5 m deep from the outside face of the exterior wall to the inside edge of the balcony, and
c) provide not less than 1.5 m^2 of balcony space for each nonambulatory occupant and 0.5 m^2 for each ambulatory occupant.

Appendix 2
Additional Suggestions and Other Comments

These are listed as they were received. A few notes of clarification are added where appropriate.

accessibility for persons is improving

hotels require more improvement there is a lack of adequate accessible facilities for meetings

Discussion paper outside reader's realm of expertise so was unsure of comments. Provide incentives to developers so cost does not become prohibitive. Too much red tape and codes will backfire on the disabled community.

The concept of Universal Design makes sense. I look forward to the day when barrier free design is incorporated without the need for signs but be inclusive in building design.

Designers need to know clearly when barrier free requirements apply, and also what constitutes a barrier free design. Previously I felt that the barriers to be eliminated were mobility barriers. Now I see that audible and visual barriers apparently are also concerns.

This committee must remember that our population is aging and we have a disabled population over 22 per cent, so it is important to get this right, now. In the disabled community we do not discriminate; we have no special requirements to join the disabled community, and it can happen very fast to become a member

Someone with mobility problems should be used to test angulation [slope] of ramps door widths corners, getting inside—all that type of thing; to make sure that we can say it's wheelchair accessible, and not just able bodied employees

The discussion paper has been impacted by the source of information, which is clearly industry stakeholders couples with what appears to be inclusive of matters in which the NSBAC has heard complaints form the industry. The lack of an appeal process for persons with disabilities and low level representation of persons with disabilities on the NSBAC has result in a non-proactive paper.

Change the NSBAC appeal process to hear consumer complaints and their representative organizations to ensure that barrier free-design section [3.8] truly meets the its' intent to guarantee access to for the marginalized population of persons with disabilities and that there is a remedy for mistakes.

Technological change should be considered from the facet of changing demographics of the consumer and the ultimate user. Scooter accessibility should now be incorporated into the code as a result of increased use in the community.

All areas of the building and not just public areas should be considered for barrier free access. This would facilitate employment and voluntary participation of persons with disabilities.

The nature of housing is changing for aging Nova Scotians. Likewise, the population of persons with disabilities is already high in NS. The Association seeks changes to the requirements in constructing apartment buildings. Such changes would guarantee a barrier free path of travel without and within the entire building to accommodate persons with disabilities. These changes would include all washrooms, living and common use areas. Necessary hardware could be omitted as a result of choice but the basic barrier free size requirements must be the minimum standard.

Application of the Code should be expanded or gradually expanded to consider residential applications in new construction to require all new homes to be barrier-free. [Editors note: The Association recognizes the need for a planned implementation.]

Establish a Frequently Asked Questions providing interpretations of the Code.

Change the entire way of thinking regarding the barrier-free section of the code that would make a primary commitment to the consumer needs above all other considerations.

The Association recognizes the move towards principals of universal design. The association asks that the code have as its essence this principal which calls for design to be useable for all persons to the greatest extent, without a need for adaptation or "special" designs.

Clarify requirements for edge of ramps and when guards are required. Consider chemical sensitivities in building requirements. May not be able to address composition of materials in construction and furnishings and fixtures, but could require better ventilation standards. Bring back operable transoms. Review literature respecting smoke control.

The following were suggestions from a visually impaired person with depth of perception problems:

- All new and existing buildings required to have orange strips on steps
- All escalators should be required to have orange strips on steps
- All glass doors should be required to have orange strips
- Mirrors should not be allowed near glass doors or stairs
- All accessible entrances should be required to have handrails on stairs
- Washrooms should be required to have coloured signage and braille to indicated male and female
- Water closets should have toilet paper dispensers designed to allow easy use—rolls should be easily visible and accessible.
- Elevators should have voice devices to indicate floors. This should be mandatory where doctors' offices and government agencies are located.
- Braille exiting indicators should be required in all tourist accommodations.
- Buildings such as the Metro Centre should be required to have handrails on the stairs to the seating. This would assist the elderly and visually impaired in emergency situations as well.

Locate dryer vents to lessen the impact for those with environmental sensitivity. - chemical sensitivity with varying degree of tolerance carpet has formaldehyde, smoke free, dry vent & pesticide free area of building may be fine for some and larger areas required for others. Buildings need to be designed for the 10 per cent of the population that are suffering from chemical and environmental sensitivities.

By main streaming and universal design society generally is in a win-win situation with persons with disabilities.

A grant committee should be established for specific assistance up to a minimum standard for all disabled persons. Accessibility, environmentally safe secure as possible, and visually secure etc. All new buildings must meet all the barrier free codes and old ones met in their plans [for renovations?] before any permits issued. All ramps should exceed the maximum width of a wheelchair by at least a minimum of 6 inches on either side. How do buildings ready themselves for emergency situations? There should be some type of regulation, if possible in all buildings, disabled persons should be placed on the main floor, 1st floor only if necessary. Contingency plans for evacuation need to be in place. Not enough reference in this discussion paper on emergency situations - a vital missed matter in disability customers' situations. [Editors note: emergency evacuation plans are already required to be filed with fire departments for all persons under the building and fire codes]

The CPA and LEO be re-invited at the advisory committee level and 3rd party interventions be enabled under the Building Code Act.

Changes must be made to ensure all apartment buildings constructed meet barrier free requirements in all areas. Scooters need to be included in the design requirements with wider doors and turning radii. Not only should public areas in buildings [business] be accessible but all areas of employment should be considered as to assist people with disabilities with employment goals.

Visitor Information Centres, Attractions, and Festivals and Events should be considered for barrier free access.

Clarification of 3.2.2.3. in terms of a suite - maybe use 3.8.2.3. in NBC.

Clarification of BF parking stall to entrance - minimum or maximum distance. [Editors note- this is already required in 3.8.2.2.(5) (c) to be not more than 50 m]

Enforce what is already in the code. Add all new dwelling construction have one level entrance to a living area

All new dwelling construction have one level entrance to a living area with accessible bathroom.

One should always be careful when writing their own standard to ensure that the people included have the expertise to properly carry out the task at hand.

Use common sense when deciding these issues—public consultation is a step in the right direction.

Barrier free access to buildings is very important and should be implemented where possible, however, we must not forget that once persons enter the building, plans for their safety and exit in event of an emergency must be in place in all cases.

Other Comments:

I'm very glad to see these changes but disappointed to see only one person with a Disability on this Board [the NSBAC]. The only true way to have complete representation would be a cross selection of persons with disabilities. I see you have done this with the construction industry, but not the disabled community. I would like to remind the committee that accommodation is my right under the Human Rights Act. Just not something nice to do for persons' with disabilities.

One respondent submitted a letter that makes three points:

- NS has the highest percentage of persons with disabilities in Canada.
- Studies show that $ 0.70 to $1.00 positive return for each $1.00 spent on improving accessibility.
- Average age of NS is increasing, and with aging mobility and accessibility issues follow. If we do not provide access to building frequented by the public (not just those owned by the public) there will follow demands for service which will likely cost far more as necessary public services must be brought to the individual.

If anything should be done it is to address the lack of third party interventions. It is not acceptable to relegate appeals to the Human Rights Commission. There is no real commitment by government to make this province at least equal to other provinces. It's my experience as a municipal councillor for 17 years that the general population supports an all-inclusive building code, not one that discriminates against a significant part of the population.

We do not feel qualified to comment. However any amendments should be weighed very carefully before any changes are made. Sections referring to apartment buildings as desirable as proposed changes may will increase design and construction costs and will be passed on to the user, or will contribute to the abandonment of projects (due to excessive costs).

The ongoing problem with the current code is the degree of enforcement. The main area of non-compliance is with the code being implemented correctly, and the understanding of those who are responsible for carrying out the code—the inspectors. Inspector training should include learning and interpreting the code, as well as knowledge of disabilities, and an understanding of accessibility issues.

We would like to see the code change to better improve the access of PWD. Another change would be to have newly constructed single family dwellings accessible at one entrance and to a bathroom. Nova Scotia League for Equal Opportunities would like to be re-invited at the advisory committee level. We want the NS Government to better enforce the code so that persons with disabilities do not have to make a complaint to the human rights commission.